

Brazos Watermaster Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: July 18, 2018 Time: 1:30 pm

**Location: Brazos River Authority Offices,
4600 Cobbs Drive, Waco, Texas, 76710**

List of Brazos Watermaster Advisory Committee (BWAC) Members:

Scott Blasor, Palo Pinto MWD #1
Brad Brunett, Brazos River Authority
Carl Burch, NRG Power
Jonathan Dulus, City of Waco
Timothy D. Finley, Dow Chemical Company
Robert George, Irrigator
Tommy Hodges, Alcoa
David Sauer, Gulf Coast Water Authority - Chairman
Gary Spicer, Luminant Power
Rodney Stephens, Irrigator
Kevin Taylor, Somervell County Water District
Nicole Torralva, City of Temple
Brent Wheeler, Irrigator

BWAC Members absent: Robert George, Brent Wheeler

TCEQ staff present:

Amy Settemeyer – Manager, Watermaster Section
Molly Mohler – Brazos Watermaster
Kim Wilson – Director for Water Rights Availability Division
Kelly Mills – Assistant Director for Water Availability Division
Nancy Ragland – Assistant Brazos Watermaster
Christina Hebert – Budget Administrative Assistant
Ben Jacobson – Watermaster Deputy (Waco)
Sean Jurkis – Watermaster Deputy (College Station)
Dave Pelloux – Watermaster Deputy (Waco)
Guy Falzarano – Watermaster Deputy (Angleton)
Steven Dyer – Watermaster Deputy (DFW)
Ashley Titus – Watermaster Deputy (Stephenville)
Stephen Kinal – Watermaster Liaison (Austin)
Brooke McGregor – Watermaster Liaison (Austin)
Eugenie Schieve – Watermaster Intern (Austin)

Guests present: Jordan Furnans (consultant), James Boykin (City of College Station Water Services), Ron and Linda Ryder (Property Owner's Association, Hilltop Lakes), Aaron Abel (BRA), Wes Lloyd, George Brown (LRA water), Robert Norris, Glen and Mary Marecek, Ernest Schreiber (Dow)

Call to Order and Introductions

- Meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm by David Sauer, BWAC Chair.
- Welcoming comments were made by Brad Brunett, on behalf of the Brazos River Authority.
- All BWAC Members, TCEQ staff, and guests introduced themselves.

Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

- Minutes from the prior meeting were circulated for review and approval:
 - February 20, 2018 meeting
 - After brief review and Brad Brunett moved to approve minutes, Kevin Taylor seconds the motion. Motion is passed by a unanimous verbal vote.

Old Business (Nominating Committee, Election of Vice Chair)

- David Sauer introduced old topic and thanked Brent Wheeler, Rodney Stephens, and Jonathan Dulus for their assistance in submitting a slate of candidates.
- David Sauer stated that he had talked to the nominees and Scott Blaser has agreed to serve in the position of Vice Chair. Motion made to approve Scott Blaser as Vice Chair.
- Tim Finley moved, and Rodney Stevens seconded it. Motion is passed by a unanimous verbal vote.

Watermaster Staff Update (Molly Mohler & Amy Settemeyer)

Staff (Molly Mohler and Amy Settemeyer) reported that:

- Since our last meeting, we've had two new employees come on, Christina Hebert (budget administrative assistant) and Dave Pelloux (Deputy in Waco). One administrative staff position remains vacant, hoping to get it filled soon.
- Deputies are rotating duties, as needed, to keep up with work and to provide support in associated areas.
- Recently, been working on drought conditions, some parts of the basin are very dry and as a result are holding pretty firm on 24-hour notices for divisions, review for special conditions where needed.
- Stream flows are being monitored, along with BRA releases. Run of the river and contract water allocations are being monitored to know how much water is available and to ensure users are diverting as authorized and reporting as required.
- For fiscal year beginning 9/1/17, the watermaster program had 15 inquiries, 12 complaints, 2 notification of violation, and 1 notice of enforcement.

2019 Fiscal Year Budget Proposal and Review

- Proposed budget for FY '19 was sent out the previous week for member review.
- Amy Settemeyer provides a few highlights, as follows:

- Bottom line is going down (no vehicle purchases for FY '19)
- Biggest increase is in rent for the Waco office (previously not been paying, will be now moving forward, consistent with other programs to be self-sufficient)
- There are no vehicle replacement needs currently
- For FY20/21, 2 vehicles may be requested for approval
- David Sauer asked how many miles/year on vehicles are projected, Amy mentions state guidelines (9 years, 100,000 miles when staff can begin talking about vehicle replacements).
- Trying to avoid replacement of all vehicles in 1 or 2 years, attempting to stagger by rotating vehicle use.
- Molly states that vehicles are now putting on 20,000 to 30,000 per year, with the highest vehicle mileage in the 60,000 mile range. Staff has changed their practices some in operations to adjust as needed.
- Vehicle maintenance is in the line item for facilities, furniture (enough funds projected to cover needs).
- Brad Brunett asked for a refresher on professional services. Amy shared the cost for contractor to management software bugs in the accounting system.
- Question on reduction in fuels/lubricants. Molly states they looked at historical numbers and are comfortable with what's been projected for the FY '19 budget.
- Reports will continue to be reviewed and may change some next year.
- Gary Spicer commented that several lines are under budget, what about those expenses? Amy replied that salary lag savings don't normally come back to the program, but that other line items stay in the Brazos budget. Some items can be carried over into next year, it just depends.
- Nicole Torralva requests a summary of actual costs since program inception. Amy replied that she will pull the information together.
- David Sauer commented that there is 1 vacancy in admin, and there were only 5 deputies when the program first started. Now there are 6 deputies.
- Jonathan Dulus asked whether staff has the ability to have field tablets. Amy stated that tablets are not currently a standard piece of equipment and that though some programs were in a pilot study to test the use of tablets, BWAC is not one of them.

New Business

- Following staff review, Nicole Torralva moved to recommend approval of the 2019 Proposed Brazos Watermaster Assessment to TCEQ Commissioners, and Scott Blaser seconded it. Motion is passes by a unanimous verbal vote.
- David Sauer introduced discussion related to Committee By-Laws and possible revisions. Asked the committee about thoughts related to the makeup and term limits of the group.
- Gary Spicer stated he thinks it is important to continue to have a diverse group for a while, with representation up and down the basin. Thinks we need some firm amendment so when the time comes, there is guidance.

- Brad Brunett indicates a 2-year term seems appropriate.
- Committee members discussed and considered the pros and cons of amending the current language.
- Each WAC considers amendments differently.
- South Texas meets annually.
- Rio Grande meets quarterly.
- South Texas group nominates from the floor, nominations can either come from committee or be submitted from the floor.
- Vacancies will be filled through a proposal made by the nominating committee at the next future date.
- No action today, will be discussed further at a future meeting.
- David Sauer will take the first stab at an amendment and circulate for comment before the next meeting.

Next Meeting

- Call for the next meeting may be depending upon basin conditions. If no immediate issues, January or February may be better.
- Having at least two meetings per year helps everyone remain engaged.
- A spring meeting will help to set up budget discussions and consideration in early summer.
- Next scheduled meeting will be in January 2019 (unless there is a need to call one earlier).

Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 2:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Torralva, Secretary